3: Ray E-5 (1928-35) 1936 Plateau

very often impossible to make any use of what might otherwise be valuable material because of the distortions and variations in the recording of native words.[7]

Further, I feel that it is methodologically preferable to handle separately data from field research and from historical sources unless they are distinctly supplementary one to the other or provide a check one upon the other. Important generalizations which might come from independent treatment are in danger of being lost by joint treatment in an attempt to reconcile apparent contradictions which are almost certain to be present in the two sets of data.

Finally, and to sum up, the object of this paper is to present a limited amount of reasonably complete and accurate source material of a usable nature, material which may be checked and supplemented in the field and from which tenable generalizations may be drawn.

II.

The physiographic province known as the Columbia Basin is the geographic unit which most nearly coincides with the cultural area here considered. The Basin is bounded on the west by the Cascade mountains, on the south by the Blue mountains, on the east and the north by relatively low lying extensions of the Rocky Mountains, particularly the Selkirk range and the Okanogan Highlands. The habitat of the northeasternmost peoples here treated extended for some distance into the Northern Rocky Mountain province.

Geologically the Columbia Basin is strikingly characterized by a succession of lava flows reaching a thickness of 4000 feet in some places. The Columbia river, which drains all of the Basin as well as large adjacent areas, has cut a huge canyon hundreds of feet deep through this bed of basalt. The bed further has been broken up by gorges cut by ancient streams and by the river at times when it temporarily was blocked from

[7] Such distortion is of course unavoidable without an adequate method of phonetic transcription. For reference to the method now in use see footnote 37.